SUDOKU ALPHA

QUICK **A5307**

1					8		7	
	4						6	9
3					9		4	8
				2	3			4
				6		8		7
5				7				2
	6	8			1	5		
						4	9	1
4		3	5					

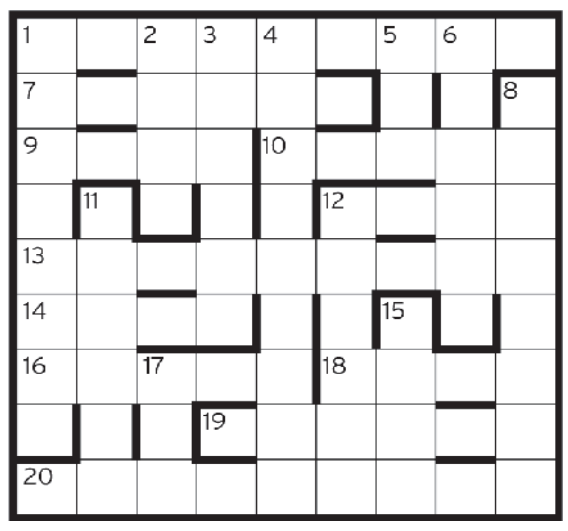
TRICKY **B5307**

3	8						2	5
9							7	
1				5	4			3
		2			9	3		
						2		
	7		5					8
							8	6
	5		6		7			
			1		8		9	

To solve this puzzle each 3x3 box, each row and each column must contain all the numbers 1 to 9. While the rules may be simple, there are numerous strategies to help you solve sudoku. For hints and information visit www.sudoku.org.uk.

Created by Peter Ritmeester (C) PZZL.com

CROSSWORD



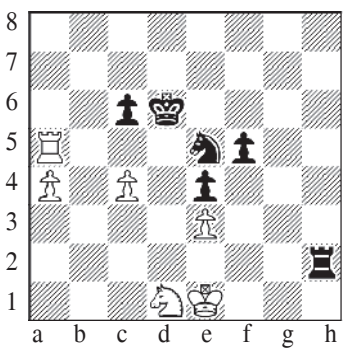
ACROSS

1 Extremely loud (9)
7 Pardon, forgive (6)
9 Maize (4)
10 Transparent (5)
12 Village fair (4)
13 Sin asleep (anag.) (9)
14 Drag or tow (4)
16 African country (5)
18 _ Simone, singer (4)
19 Niche (6)
20 Inhabitants (9)

DOWN

1 Decode (8)
2 Area of land (4)
3 Relating to mushrooms (6)
4 Intensified (9)
5 Decorate a cake (3)
6 Make tidy (6)
8 Go illegally onto land (8)
11 Breed of dog (6)
12 Betrothed (6)
15 Demeanour (4)
17 Affirmative answer (3)

CHESS



BLACK WINS A KNIGHT

HINT: DRIVE AWAY WHITE'S KING.

Solution:
1. ... Nf3ch! 2. Kf1 Rh1ch
3. Ke2 Re1ch 4. Kf2 Rxd1
[Dzagnidze-Hou, '14]

TARGET

HOW many words of four letters or more can you make from the letters shown here?
In making a word, each letter may be used once only. Each must contain the centre letter and there must be at least one nine-letter word.
No plurals or verb forms ending in "s".

TODAY'S TARGET

Good 15;

Very good 22;

Excellent 29 (or more).

Solution tomorrow.

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTIONS

GROUNDING

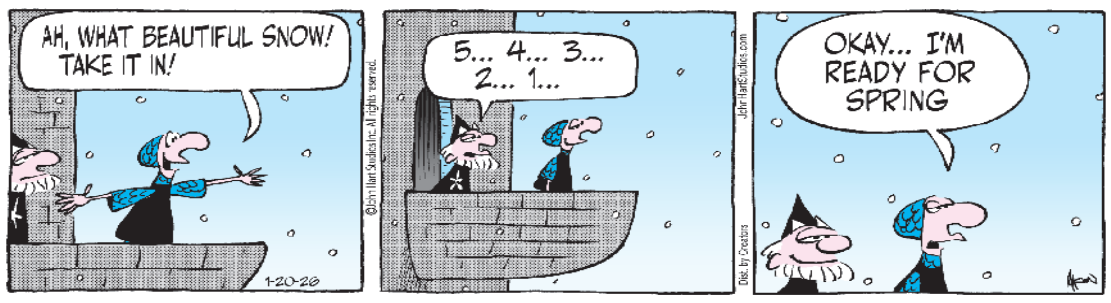
ding, dingo, doing, dong, donging, doning, dour, droning, drug, dugong, dung, dunno, during, gird, gourd, grid, grind, ground, GROUNDING, nudging, nurd, rind, round, rounding, undo, undoing, ungird

THE METRO FUNNIES

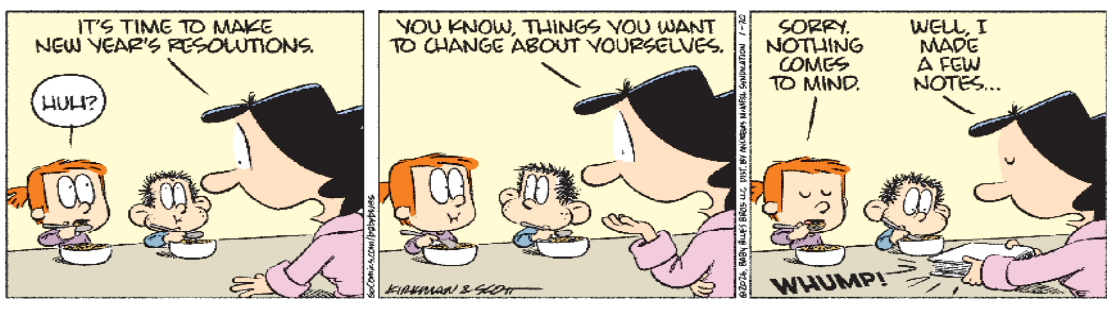
BIG NATE | BY LINCOLN PEIRCE

WHAT'S THIS I HEAR ABOUT YOU WRITING CHEERS?
IT'S TRUE!
THE CHEER SQUAD IS TIRED OF SPELLING OUT "BOBCATS" AND LAME STUFF LIKE THAT! SO I'M INVENTING SOME NEW ONES!
FOR EXAMPLE, I'VE COME UP WITH ONE CALLED "THE OTHER TEAM STINKS."
LET'S HEAR IT!
THAT. THAT WAS THE CHEER.
Visit bignate.com

THE WIZARD OF ID | BY BRANT PARKER AND JOHNNY HART



BABY BLUES


IT'S TIME TO MAKE NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS.
HUH?
YOU KNOW, THINGS YOU WANT TO CHANGE ABOUT YOURSELVES.
SORRY. NOTHING COMES TO MIND.
WELL, I MADE A FEW NOTES...
WHUMP!

WEATHER

Sunset & Sunrise

	Hyderabad	Islamabad	Karachi	Lahore	Peshawar	Quetta
Sunset	06:02pm	05:29pm	06:08pm	05:28pm	05:34pm	06:03pm
Sunrise	07:12am	07:07am	07:17am	06:59am	07:15am	07:23am

Three Day Forecast

	Today				Tomorrow			Day After		
	Min	Max	Outlook	Humidity%	Min	Max	Outlook	Min	Max	Outlook
Faisalabad	8	22	Partly Cloudy	70	8	23	Sunny	9	21	PM Showers
Hyderabad	11	28	Sunny	70	12	27	Sunny	8	26	Partly Cloudy
Islamabad	8	20	Cloudy	57	9	21	Mostly Sunny	8	18	PM Rain
Lahore	8	21	Partly Cloudy	78	8	22	Partly Cloudy	12	20	Mostly Cloudy
Multan	8	22	Sunny	72	9	22	Sunny	6	20	PM Rain
Peshawar	6	19	Cloudy	63	7	20	Cloudy	6	13	Rain
Quetta	1	13	Sunny	31	-1	11	Partly Cloudy	-9	2	AM Snow

Temperature estimates are internationally sourced and may differ from local estimates.

HELP

EMERGENCIES

Police Help	15, 99212652-53, 99212634
CPLC	1102, 35662222
Fire Brigade	16, 99215007, 99215008.
Bomb Disposal	99212674
KE Complaints	118
Telephone complaints	1218
Railway Inquiry	99213565-66
PCAA Flight Inquiry	99071284, 99071259
	99071265, 114

HOSPITALS

Abbasi Shaheed	99260400-09
Civil Hospital	99215740, 9215960
Jinnah Hospital	99201300-99201301
NICVD	99201271-6
Aga Khan Hospital	34930051
Medicare Hospital	021-111-001-786
Kharadar Gen Hospital	32510113-16
Indus Hospital	35112709
Tabba	36811841, 111844844
Ziauddin Hospital	35862937-9, 36648237-9
Kiran Cancer Hospital	99261601-04
Liaquat National	111-456-456, 34939615
Memon Medical	34691147 — 54
A.O. Clinic	36685564, 3668550-64
Baqai Hospital	36618396, 36618398
Holy Family Hospital	32258994, 32258991
Patel Hospital	111174174
South City Hospital	35374072
Kidney Centre Institute	35661000-10
Karwan-e-Hayat	021-111534111
Usman Memorial	021-36310311-15

AMBULANCE

Edhi	115, 32310066, 32310077
Chhipa	1020
SIEHS/Rescue	1122
St.John	32250500, 32250600
Red Crescent	35306227, 35306228

BLOOD BANK

Fatmid	32225284, 32258656
Husaini	32238405-08
PWA (Civil)	99215740, 99215959

WORD GAME

By Kathleen Saxe

▼ TODAY'S WORD

SERIAL

(SERIAL: SERE-ee-ul: Appearing in successive parts or numbers.)

Average mark 16 words
Time limit 20 minutes

Can you find 20 or more words in SERIAL?

The list will be published tomorrow.

SOLUTIONS

▼ YESTERDAY'S WORD — PETTIER

peer, pert, peter, petite, petter, pier, pitter, tier, tire, titer, tree, trip, tripe, trite, retie, ripe, rite

RULES OF THE GAME:

1. Words must be of four or more letters.
2. Words that acquire four letters by the addition of "s," such as "bats" or "dies," are not allowed.
3. Additional words made by adding a "d" or an "s" may not be used. For example, if "bake" is used, "baked" or "bakes" are not allowed, but "bake" and "baking" are admissible.
4. Proper nouns, slang words, or vulgar or sexually explicit words are not allowed.

YESTERDAY'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

ACROSS

Offspring Virtue Subplot Rear Ash Mediate Ian Dear Graphic Lesson Thrashing.

DOWN

Oversight Fire Sturdy Publishes Ill Noose Gathering Radish Marsh Anon Air.

METRO EVENTS

TALK

'AI and Urdu', a talk by Sean Pue, professor of South Asian Studies at the University of Maryland, College Park, is held at Indus Valley School of Art and Architecture, at 3pm.

CONFERENCES

A two-day conference on 'The Defensive Strategy of the State in the Light of the Seerah' is held at the Chinese Teachers Memorial Auditorium, University of Karachi, at 10am.

The 'International Medical Education Conference 2026 — Research Reinvented: The Power of Artificial Intelligence' is organised at Seminar Hall, ENT Building, Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, at 10am.

WORKSHOP

A pre-conference workshop on 'Wellness and Resilience Across Education and Practice' is organised at Dr Ishratul Ebad Khan Institute of Oral Health Sciences, DUHS, at 9am.

EXHIBITIONS

When Heritage Echoed, an exhibition of artworks by Ustaad Rustam Khan, opens at Art Scene Gallery, at 6pm. The show will remain open till Jan 26.

An exhibition of works by Farazeh Syed opens at Canvas Gallery at 4pm. Titled *All the Women in Me,* it will continue till Jan 29, from 11am to 7pm.

HOROSCOPE

By Georgia Nicols

ARIES | March 21-April 19

**** Discussions with parents, bosses and authority figures will go well today. Others see you as persevering, conscientious and dogged in your attempt to get things done. People will admire you. Meanwhile, you're popular and display great people skills. (I'm impressed.) Tonight: Privacy.

TAURUS | April 20-May 20

**** Today you have the patience to handle the details required to make travel plans or to continue to travel. Likewise, you can move forward with confidence exploring avenues in publishing, the media, medicine and the law. You have the perseverance; plus, bosses are impressed with you! Tonight: Friendships.

GEMINI | May 21-June 20

**** Despite your desire to "get away from all this" and do something different, (you want to run away and join the circus), this is actually a good day to tackle boring, red-tape details about taxes, debt, insurance issues and banking, because you won't overlook anything. You'll get stuff done! (Who knew?) Tonight: You're noticed.

CANCER | June 21-July 22

*** Today you might need to share your grievances with a close friend, partner or spouse, especially about shared expenses and the division of labor -- practical issues. You want to move forward so that things run more smoothly and everyone carries their fair share. Tonight: Explore!

LEO | July 23-Aug. 22

**** You can get a terrific amount done today because you're pumped to achieve something. You have the drive, energy, perseverance and ability to follow through on details (as well as grunt work that you might normally avoid). Don't push yourself too hard. You need more rest this month. Tonight: Check your finances.

VIRGO | Aug. 23-Sept. 22

**** This is a productive day! Not only are you keen to work, many of you will make headway if you're practicing a musical instrument, a particular sport or doing anything that requires honing a skill until you get better and better. You're in the zone! Tonight: Cooperate.

LIBRA | Sept. 23-Oct. 22

**** You feel friendly, sociable and eager to explore entertaining diversions. Sports events and fun activities with kids will be excellent choices. Nevertheless, you might spend considerable energy making improvements where you live. You've got the urge and the drive. Tonight: Get organized.

SCORPIO | Oct. 23-Nov. 21

*** Your communication skills are great today, which is why this is a good day to state your case and defend your ideas. You will be logical, clear and proactive, which means people will listen to you and understand what you want. Go for it! Tonight: Socialize!

SAGITTARIUS | Nov. 22-Dec. 21

**** You will work to boost your income today, which is why you're making lists and noticing every detail necessary to enhance your good fortune. You're on your game and you won't miss a trick. Communications are also excellent. Tonight: Relax.

CAPRICORN | Dec. 22-Jan. 19

**** This is a productive day because Mars is in your sign dancing with stern Saturn. Whatever you do, you will do with diligence and patience. You won't overlook details and you'll work hard today for results in the future. Reality and practicality will come first. Tonight: Lively conversations.

AQUARIUS | Jan. 20-Feb. 18

*** This is a strong time with the Sun, Mercury, Venus and the Moon in your sign. (The entire world is having an Aquarian hit!) Enjoy schmoozing with others; you have something to say. Be-hind-the-scenes research might yield important information for you. Tonight: Check your possessions.

PISCES | Feb. 19-Mar. 20

**** If you are competing with someone or you need to rouse your troops, you're in the position to do so today. You will work assiduously to achieve your goals. You will leave no stone unturned. You will corral others to do your bidding or, at least, set a sterling example. Tonight: You win!

The stars show the kind of day you'll have: 5-Dynamic; 4-Positive; 3-Average; 2-so-so; 1-Difficult

CONTRACT BRIDGE

Bidding Quiz

By Steve Becker

Super psychology

South dealer.
North-South vulnerable.

NORTH
♠ 9 6 3
♥ A 5
♦ A Q 8 7 4
♣ K 7 3

WEST
♠ K Q 10 8 7
♥ K Q 10 4
♦ 6 3
♣ 6 2

EAST
♠ 5 2
♥ J 8 7 6 2
♦ K 5
♣ 9 8 5 4

SOUTH
♠ A J 4
♥ 9 3
♦ J 10 9 2
♣ A Q J 10

The bidding:

South	West	North	East
1 ♣	1 ♠	2 ♦	Pass
3 ♦	Pass	3 ♥	Pass
3 NT			

Opening lead -- king of spades.

To succeed, a good bridge player must also be a good psychologist. There are times when an opponent's thought processes can be turned against him, and one must always be on the lookout for such opportunities.

South was a fine psychologist on this deal. West led the king of spades, and declarer saw immediately that if West had the king of diamonds, the contract was ice-cold, since he would score 11 tricks with the aid of diamond finesse.

But South was concerned about what might happen if East had the king of diamonds. In that case, the contract was in serious danger.

The immediate question was whether or not to win the first trick. Declarer knew that if he took the ace and tried a diamond finesse, he would go down if the finesse lost and East had a spade to return.

South also knew that if he played low on the spade lead, West would almost surely shift to a heart, and the contract again would collapse if East had the king of diamonds.

Faced with these threatening possibilities, South came up with the brilliant idea of playing the jack of spades on West's king! West naturally thought declarer had the A-J alone -- which was exactly what South hoped he would think -- and continued with the queen of spades, expecting his partner to have a third spade to return later if he gained the lead.

Declarer took the queen of spades with the ace and tried the diamond finesse. The finesse lost, all right, but East had no spade to return, and South finished with 10 tricks as well as high marks for his superb application of practical psychology.

Tomorrow: The rationale of good defense.

YESTERDAY'S SUDOKU SOLUTIONS

Quick — A5306

3	1	8	4	5	2	9	7	6
4	6	2	9	7	1	5	3	8
7	5	9	6	3	8	2	4	1
1	9	3	7	8	6	4	5	2
5	7	6	2	4	9	8	1	3
2	8	4	3	1	5	7	6	9
9	4	7	8	6	3	1	2	5
6	2	1	5	9	4	3	8	7
8	3	5	1	2	7	6	9	4

Tricky — B5306

2	6	1	7	3	8	5	4	9
9	5	3	2	6	4	7	1	8
8	7	4	9	5	1	6	3	2
6	3	7	1	4	2	9	8	5
1	9	2	3	8	5	4	6	7
5	4	8	6	7	9	3	2	1
3	8	9	4	2	7	1	5	6
4	1	5	8	9	6	2	7	3
7	2	6	5	1	3	8	9	4